

Non-Self and Conditions Arising Compounded Causal Actions

by

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“Deep is this dependent co-arising [Conditions Arising or Dependent Origination], and deep its appearance. It's because of not understanding and not penetrating this Dharma that this generation is like a tangled skein, a knotted ball of string, like matted rushes and reeds, and does not go beyond transmigration, beyond the planes of deprivation, woe, and bad destinations.” DN 15

Causes and effects (causality) as interacting events appears straightforward as charged instances go on to give way to the next compounded action episodes and instances, but there is also the complexity of interaction actions as having an ethical detrimental-unwholesome or beneficial-wholesome qualities inspired as purposeful actions by one's karmic intended expressions through body, speech and mind, and going on to follow a past-dormant, present-active and future-transgressing trajectory (this isn't to be mistaken as fate but reflects responsibility and ownership of one's behavior and actions which can be altered and redirected). The Buddha chastised his personal attendant Ven. Ananda for thinking and assuming the Conditions Arising causal scenario as simple and straightforward (*“Deep is this dependent co-arising, and deep its appearance. It's because of not understanding and not penetrating this Dharma that this generation is like a tangle skein, a knotted ball of string, like matted rushes and reeds, and does not go beyond transmigration, beyond the planes of deprivation, woe, and bad destinations.”* DN 15).

As part of the greater picture of life and reality (phenomena), the body/mind self illusion reflects impermanence, an underlying dissatisfaction and ongoing challenges as well as being non-self in nature (the many action instances giving the illusion of the 'one' or self). Handicapped by a self view seeking constant gratification and fulfillment, the self actor is unaware, careless, disappointed and suffers accordingly.

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Think of causal actions as the sun rising in the far eastern horizon having a past influence, present actions climaxing as an active noon day sun, and the sun setting over the far western horizon as a future-transgressing experience. Undermined by a mistaken past-dormant self-sourced reference inspiring karmic intentions, a present-active craved after urgency to fulfill a self-identity is pursued, and future-transgressing consequential actions play out as suffering. The Buddha penetrated the vast role of Conditions Arising non-self causal actions and shared the Middle Way Path not dominated or limited by self extremes as a present well-being, for future well-being, and as the ultimate overcoming and liberation from self-deluded suffering.

The body/mind self-identification one cherishes is a 'heap' of collected factors or a Humpty Dumpty-like pieced together, the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification joined actions of material form and four related mental components—body, feelings, perception, mental reactions, and consciousness make-up the body/mind self-identified illusion one has misconstrued, cherishes, is attached to, promotes and seeks to uphold as impermanent, unrewarding culminating in dissatisfaction and suffering, and of a non-self compounded diverse action nature.

The body is likened to foam (reflecting the four Great Elements of earth, water, air and temperature) a soft figure which doesn't last and has no true individual characteristic; feelings (pleasant, painful and neutral sense stimulated reactions) are likened to bubbles that arise then disappear, reflecting life's impermanence and having no true individual characteristic; perception (as identification and labeling ongoing interactions) is likened to a mirage reflection as a false and beguiling deception and having no true individual characteristic; mental reactions (as a charged karmic driven craved after self-deluded history) are likened to the rolled layers of a plantain tree, having no hard wood core or true individual characteristic; and consciousness (life in general viewed as self and individual) is likened to a trick performed by a magician, an illusion without any real or defining self-characteristic (SN 22, 95).

"One directly knowing form [the body], fully understanding it, removing passion for it, abandoning it, is capable of destroying suffering. One directly knowing feeling...directly knowing

perception...directly knowing [mental states]...directly knowing consciousness, fully understanding it, removing passion for it, abandoning it, is capable of destroying suffering.” SN 22, 24; III 26-27

Like rubbing sticks together starting a fire, a wrongly held self-sourced view as ignorance or misunderstanding ignites the fabricated self conceit ‘I am’ flames to go on to spark additional flames and continue to blaze as the Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification (body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and consciousness) having far reaching smoldering-like suffering implications. Additionally flamed by impermanence’s friction and a general dissatisfaction of life, compelling-willed karmic intent as detrimental or beneficial actions ignite a craved after urgency (*‘the seamstress’*) to fulfill a self-identity linking the self-flamed instances and setting off future-transgressing suffering inferno. Conditions Arising causal actions reflect a self-afflicted hell.

The Four Noble Truths paradigm reveal the cause of suffering as misunderstanding life as self-sourced or self-defined; the source or origin as a karmic inspired craved after urgency to fulfill a self-identity links self-instances and continues the suffering progression; the elimination of the karmic inspired craved urgency to fulfill a self-identity ends suffering (realizing Nirvana); and the Noble Eightfold Path guidance is to be followed and fulfilled as wisdom uprooting the self-sourced suffering ordeal.

The Middle Way Abhidharma recognition and discernment not dominated or limited by self extremes, clarifies reality (phenomena) and the misunderstood and undermining false self-delusion:

- a self-illusion in relationship to what is around one;
- a self-illusion in relationship to a specific location, event, place or time;
- a self-illusion as apart from or separate in relationship to life-action phenomena in general (but rather reflecting a diversity of actions, the many actions giving the illusion of the ‘one’);
- not confusing the impermanent as permanent, the dissatisfying as rewarding, the non-self as self, or the impure as pure.

Rightly discerned is life as impermanent, a general dissatisfaction never to be fulfilled, and of a non-self diverse action nature; not

confusing the impermanent as permanent, the dissatisfying as rewarding, the non-self as self, or the impure as pure. Realized is what is deceptive (self) and what is not deceptive (the non-self and Nirvana, undeceived without self-distinction or self-promotion)

“‘Everything exists’: That is one extreme. ‘Everything doesn’t exist’: That is a second extreme. Avoiding these two extremes, the [Buddha] teaches the Dharma via the middle [not misconstrued as self-sourced but as causal compounded actions].” SN 12, 15

“When there is this, that comes to be; with the arising of this, that arises. When there is not this, that does not come to be; with the cessation of this that ceases” [as contributing cause and effect actions] MN 79

Conditions Arising—the plural ‘conditions’ expresses the connection of many conditions, pressures, elements, influences, experiences and instances joining to give the illusion of the ‘one’ or self; ‘arising’ is reference to the purposeful arising of diversely joined compounded causal actions underscoring life (the many actions giving the illusion of the ‘one’ or a self). A complexity of interacting instances, Conditions Arising as a dynamic cycle effects both physical and psychological events as a past-dormant, present-active and future-transgressing actions.

Time in the traditional sense of minutes, days, months and years is inaccurate, but rather there are multiple, overlapping and interacting generated conditions, pressures, elements, experiences and influences as purposeful detrimental-unwholesome and beneficial-wholesome actions play out (the many actions giving the illusion of the ‘one’ or self). A human life may reach 80 years old but, in fact, it is the course of actions, events, conditions and consequences playing out that give an illusion of an individual, self and person and the appearance of a self-narrative. Life, a person, place and time are interacting action instances without self-source or self-definition.

There are three Conditioned Realms or world systems mistaken as self-sourced and self-identified: the present Sense Realm is dominated by the senses and base physical engagement mistaken as self in nature where human life as well as animals and demonic-like

hungry ghosts reside; the Fine-Material Realm weakened sensory activity along with keen concentration and insight, nevertheless is misconstrued as self-sourced; and the Immaterial Realm of pure psychic energy or mental potential is mistaken as self-defined. All three realms are governed by a corrupt self-sourced reference, impermanence and a general dissatisfaction, and follow as Conditions Arising compounded causal self-charged history. The self-associated masquerade involved within each Conditioned Realm persists and thrives through a misconstrued self-identification, inspired detrimental-unwholesome and beneficial-wholesome karmic intentions, and a craved after urgency (*'the seamstress'*) to fulfill a self-identity linking a past to present to future suffering timeline. Only the Middle Way Path Abhidharma wisdom breakthrough can penetrate Nirvana as craving's thirst is quenched and the conceit 'I am' flame is extinguished. Nirvana as Unconditioned and Unfabricated is a state without self-distinction or self-promotion and is suffering free.

Conditions Arising as profoundly complex and intertwined, sense-contacted media (eyes/sight/forms, ears/hearing/sound, nose/smell/scents, tongue/taste/flavors, skin/touch/tactile and mind/thoughts/consciousness) misconstrued as self interactions have a possible 18 pleasant, painful or neutral conscious experiences with the sense-associated experience having a pleased attachment or a detachment. When multiplying the 18 two-sided attachments, there are 36 different self passions as past, present and future interactions, creating a self-timeline illusion for a possible 108 sense-contacts misconstrued as a self-experience.

Conditions Arising play out as a twelve-linked self-conflicted causal history:

Past-Dormant

- Driven by a mistaken and corrupt self-sourced view, the drive for self desire and existence or becoming arises and flourishes (the impermanent as permanent, the non-self as self, the suffering as pleasurable, and the impure as pure);
- a fabricated conceit 'I am' narrative arises in connection to a mistaken self-reference;

Present-Active

- a present consciousness arises in connection to a mistaken self-reference;
- a misconstrued body/mind self-identity arises in connection to a mistaken self-reference;
- sense-media (eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin and mind) interactions arise in connection to a mistaken self-reference;
- sense-contacted consciousness (eyes/forms/sight, ears/sound/audio, nose/smell/olfactory, tongue/taste/flavors, skin/tactile/touch and mind/thought/thinking impressions) are engaged and arise in connection to a mistaken self-reference;
- feelings (pleasant, painful and neutral) are experienced and arise in connection to a mistaken self-reference;
- inspired by compelling karmic intent, a craved after urgency to fulfill a self-identity (as desire, for a self-identity view or to escape from a self-association actually doesn't exist) links self-instances are pursued and arise in connection to a mistaken self-reference;
- a self-attachment (for sensual pleasure, views, precepts and observances, and to a self doctrine) intensifies arising in connection to a mistaken self-reference;

Future-Transgressing

- commitment as becoming to act out expressing self-interests through body, speech or mind arise in connection to a mistaken self-reference;
- birth as self-expressed actions are performed and arise in connection to a mistaken self-reference;
- and dissatisfaction and suffering (sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair) are experienced and arise in connection to a mistaken self-reference.

Settling through a Middle Way appreciation not dominated or limited by self extremes, acknowledge the body/mind Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification stressed burden: breath and breathing labored and tense, facial muscles taught and jaw clenched, shoulders hunched up, abdomen tense along with pelvic pressure and leg sensations, as well as the mind and attention stressed and narrowed as a self-defined focus. Detach to relax and feel relief from sense-media engaged contacts of eyes, ears, nose, tongue, touch and mind, along with the self-identification consuming one as a self actor.

Slowly open and gently release the underlying tense gripped self-attachment, flashing karmic inspired impulses as a craved after subliminal monologue (*the seamstress*) compels one on to self-driven actions and future-transgressing consequences.

Directed through a present Middle Way tranquil insight, note the breath's quality as calmed as well as facial muscles and the body relaxed (chin down slightly, shoulders and back muscles dropped, abdomen and legs stretching out). Follow as the mind and attention pivot away from active and engaged to a tranquil equanimity not stressed through self-identification or provoked by Conditions Arising causal instances. A Middle Way appreciation as direct insight, realize the false and deceptive nature that is the body/mind self-attachment (the many actions giving the illusion of the 'one' or self). Note the calm and repose not absorbed by karmic directed intentions and the craved after urgency to fulfill a self-identity.

A Middle Way tranquil insight reflection, the corrupt past-dormant self-sourced misunderstanding in the background undermining all experiences is neutralized. A clarified recognition, Conditions Arising compounded causal actions known, the false and deceptive self-sourced reference drive for desire and existence is discharged.

A Middle Way tranquil insight reflection, self-fabrication is recognized and not allowed to form. A clarified recognition, Conditions Arising compounded causal actions known, the fabricated conceit 'I am' is discharged.

A Middle Way tranquil insight reflection, a present-active deceived self-consciousness doesn't form as a narrowed self-defined identification. A clarified recognition, Conditions Arising compounded causal actions known, the present-active self-consciousness is discharged.

A Middle Way tranquil insight reflection, the misconstrued body/mind Five Groups of Self-Attached Identification (body, feelings, perception, mental reactions and consciousness) is clarified as the many actions giving the illusion of the 'one' or self. A clarified recognition, Conditions Arising compounded causal actions known, the body/mind Self-Attached Identification is discharged.

A Middle Way tranquil insight reflection, sense-media of eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin and mind aren't affected. A clarified recognition, Conditions Arising compounded causal actions known, sense-media association is discharged.

A Middle Way tranquil insight reflection, sense-contacted conscious experiences (eyes/forms/sight, ears/sound/audio, nose/smell/olfactory, tongue/taste/flavors, skin/tactile/touch and mind/thought/thinking impressions) do not arise to dominate. A clarified recognition, Conditions Arising compounded causal actions known, sense-contacted consciousness is discharged.

A Middle Way tranquil insight reflection, feelings (pleasant, painful and neutral) as a personal self-defined projection isn't experienced. A clarified recognition, Conditions Arising compounded causal actions known, feelings are discharged.

A Middle Way tranquil insight reflection, the karmic inspired craved after urgency to fulfill a self-identity (as desire, for a self-identity view or to escape from a self-association that doesn't exist) are muted. A clarified recognition, Conditions Arising compounded causal actions known, the craved after urgency is discharged.

A Middle Way tranquil insight reflection, self-attachment doesn't intensify to a stressed upheaval. A clarified recognition, Conditions Arising compounded causal actions known, self-attachment is discharged.

A Middle Way tranquil insight reflection, a future transgressing commitment to act out and express self-interest through body, speech or mind isn't taken up. A clarified recognition, Conditions Arising compounded causal actions known, future-transgressing commitment is discharged.

A Middle Way tranquil insight reflection, birth as self-expressed actions of body, speech and mind aren't performed. A clarified recognition, Conditions Arising compounded causal actions known, birth is discharged.

A Middle Way tranquil insight reflection, dissatisfaction as future-transgressing consequential suffering (sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair) doesn't arise. A clarified recognition, Conditions Arising compounded causal actions known, self-charged suffering is discharged.

"Deep is this dependent co-arising [Conditions Arising], and deep its appearance. It's because of not understanding and not penetrating this Dharma that this generation is like a tangled skein, a knotted ball of string, like matted rushes and reeds, and does not go beyond transmigration, beyond the planes of deprivation, woe, and bad destinations.

"If one is asked, 'Is there a demonstrable requisite condition for aging and death?' one should answer, 'There is.'

"If one is asked, 'From what requisite condition do aging and death come?' one should say, 'Aging and death come from birth as their requisite condition.'

"If one is asked, 'Is there a demonstrable requisite condition for birth?' one should answer, 'There is.'

"If one is asked, 'From what requisite condition does birth come?' one should say, 'Birth comes from becoming as its requisite condition.'

"If one is asked, 'Is there a demonstrable requisite condition for becoming?' one should answer, 'There is.'

"If one is asked, 'From what requisite condition does becoming come?' one should say, 'Becoming comes from clinging as its requisite condition.'

"If one is asked, 'Is there a demonstrable requisite condition for clinging?' one should answer, 'There is.'

"If one is asked, 'From what requisite condition does clinging come?' one should say, 'Clinging comes from craving as its requisite condition.'

"If one is asked, 'Is there a demonstrable requisite condition for craving?' one should answer, 'There is.'"

"If one is asked, 'From what requisite condition does craving come?' one should say, 'Craving comes from feeling as its requisite condition.'"

"If one is asked, 'Is there a demonstrable requisite condition for feeling?' one should answer, 'There is.'"

"If one is asked, 'From what requisite condition does feeling come?' one should say, 'Feeling comes from contact as its requisite condition.'"

"If one is asked, 'Is there a demonstrable requisite condition for contact?' one should answer, 'There is.'"

"If one is asked, 'From what requisite condition does contact come?' one should say, 'Contact comes from name-and-form as its requisite condition.'"

"If one is asked, 'Is there a demonstrable requisite condition for name-and-form?' one should answer, 'There is.'"

"If one is asked, 'From what requisite condition does name-and-form come?' one should say, 'Name-and-form comes from consciousness as its requisite condition.'"

"If one is asked, 'Is there a demonstrable requisite condition for consciousness?' one should answer, 'There is.'"

"If one is asked, 'From what requisite condition does consciousness come?' one should say, 'Consciousness comes from name-and-form as its requisite condition.'"

"Thus from name-and-form as a requisite condition comes consciousness. From consciousness as a requisite condition comes name-and-form. From name-and-form as a requisite condition comes contact. From contact as a requisite condition comes feeling. From feeling as a requisite condition comes craving. From craving as a

requisite condition comes clinging. From clinging as a requisite condition comes becoming. From becoming as a requisite condition comes birth. From birth as a requisite condition, aging, death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, and despair come into play. Such is the origination of this entire mass of stress.” DN 15

Life Practice

Why bother understanding Conditions Arising compounded causal actions and recognizing the non-self nature of the many actions giving the illusion of the ‘one’ or self? One’s happiness and peace of mind are at stake as well as liberation from suffering is to be known. There are other options than just suffering through life. Knowing the contributing factors and how suffering comes about means one can actively NOT suffer. Inspired by karmic intentions, stopping the craved after pursuit to fulfill a self-identity, bewildered self-turmoil ceases. The Middle Way is a correct centered reflection not dominated or limited by self extremes. If true understanding and suffering’s end weren’t possible then there would be no reason to follow the Middle Way Path.

Slow down. Acknowledge how sense contacts are engaged, stimulated and give rise to self-reactions. Don’t go with one’s first instinct to act out, blurt out speech and as knee-jerk reactions. The initial thought impulse is tainted by a self-sourced reference directed to upholding and fulfilling a self-fantasy. The Middle Way personal reflection and insight come together as a penetrating non-self recognition rather than ruled as a misguided self actor.

Take any event in one’s life: a disagreement at work or a memory suddenly flashing. Now run the experience backwards to see how the episode reveals a compounded causal self-charged history. Everything points to a false and corrupt self-sourced misunderstanding (ignorance) and generated karmic inspired motives as deep-seated past habits and associations influence present decision making and actions. A craved after urgency (*‘the seamstress’*) to fulfill a self-ideal opens the way to future-transgressing suffering consequences.

As one’s own therapist of sorts (who after all knows one better), wisely reflect on karmic inspired thoughts, speech and actions.

Thoughtful and discerning, realize the craved after urgency directed to fulfilling a self-identity and the associated Conditions Arising compounded causal scenario. Misunderstanding life as self-sourced, thought formations arise, a self-defined consciousness forms, a mistaken body/mind self-identification takes place, sense impressions are experienced, sense contacted consciousness arises, feelings (pleasant, painful and neutral) are generated and experienced, a craved after urgency to fulfill a self-identity compels one on, attachment intensifies, commitment to act out takes place, birth as actions are performed, and suffering consequences play out. The self-charade is exhausting and unfulfilling.

While karmic repercussions can carry over the course of many life times, all one need do is understand and focus on the present self-affliction to not go with one's first self-deceived impulse. The past can't be changed, one can only wisely learn and understand it to better direct the future—from self-sourced suffering to suffering free. The Buddha's advice to his son (MN 61) to regard one's intentions through body, speech or mind as either being harmful or beneficial are a grounded, responsible recognition (the Buddha's profound wisdom penetrated karma's far-reaching scheming and future implications). A Middle Way appreciation not dominated or limited by self extremes, one penetrates through a clarified wisdom-recognition to know life without self-domination. *"I do not say that the attainment of profound knowledge comes straight away; on the contrary, it comes by a gradual training, a gradual doing, a gradual practice."* MN 70.

It takes time to reformat the self 'hard drive' and delete self-corrupted files. Go slowly and patiently without judgment or criticism. Realize the Middle Way appreciation not dominated or limited by self extremes to connect first with the breath to note self-stressed symptoms relaxing the body then recognize the mental strain tied to an underlying self-sourced focus. Distinguish how self-inspired motives give way to a craved after urgency to pursue and uphold a self-deluded identification. The Middle Way Abhidharma recognition and discernment as personal realization reveals Conditions Arising compounded causal actions, the many actions giving the illusion of the 'one' or self. Careless detrimental actions lead to suffering and wise beneficial actions are directed to ending suffering.



We rest with the Buddha beside a stream. Bright tones of yellow, brown and green pattern the landscape.

“I will show you grasping and worry and I will show you the letting go of and freedom from grasping and worry. And what is grasping and worry? Concerning this, ordinary folk have this view: ‘This body is mine, I am this, this is my self.’ For one like this, the body alters and changes, and owing to this alteration and change, grief, sorrow, suffering, lamentation and despair arise in him. And it is the same with his feelings, perception, mental constructs and consciousness. And what is letting go of and freedom from worry? Concerning this, the well taught noble disciple has this view: ‘This body is not mine. I am not this, this is not my self.’ For one like this, the body alters and changes, but in spite of alteration and change, grief, sorrow, suffering, lamentation and despair do not arise in him. And it is the same with feelings, perception, mental constructs and consciousness. Thus, there is letting go of and freedom from grasping and worry.” SN 3, 19.

The Buddha gestures with his right hand.

“Deep is this Conditions Arising, and deep its appearance. It is because of not understanding and not penetrating this Dharma that this generation is like a tangled skein, a knotted ball of string, like matted rushes and reeds, and does not go beyond transmigration, beyond the planes of deprivation, woe, and bad destinations.” DN 15.

“I will teach you the origination of the world and the ending of the world. Listen and pay close attention.

“And what is the origination of the world? Dependent on the eye and forms there arises eye-consciousness. The meeting of the three is contact...dependent on the ear and sounds there arises ear-consciousness...dependent on the nose and aromas there arises nose-consciousness. The meeting of the three is contact...dependent on the tongue and flavors there arises tongue-consciousness. The meeting of the three is contact...dependent on the body and tactile sensations there

arises body-consciousness. The meeting of the three is contact...dependent on the intellect and mental qualities there arises intellect-consciousness. The meeting of the three is contact. From contact as a requisite condition comes feeling. From feeling as a requisite condition comes craving. From craving as a requisite condition comes clinging/sustenance. From clinging/sustenance as a requisite condition comes becoming. From becoming as a requisite condition comes birth. From birth as a requisite condition, then aging and death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, and despair come into play. This is the origination of the world.

“Now, from the remainderless cessation and fading away of that very craving comes the cessation of clinging/sustenance. From the cessation of clinging/sustenance comes the cessation of becoming. From the cessation of becoming comes the cessation of birth. From the cessation of birth, then aging and death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, and despair all cease. Such is the cessation of this entire mass of stress and suffering. This is the ending of the world.” SN 12, 44.

We have a doubtful look, not understanding the complicated sequence or implications. The Buddha breathes an encouraging smile and we smile back nervously.

“I will describe and analyze Conditions Arising for you.” His voice drops in tone.

“And what is ignorance? Not knowing [the Four Noble Truths] suffering, not knowing the origination of suffering, not knowing the cessation of suffering, not knowing the way of practice leading to the cessation of suffering: This is called ignorance.

“And what are fabrications [self-fabricated conceit narrative]? These three are fabrications: bodily fabrications, verbal fabrications, mental fabrications. These are called fabrications.

“And what is consciousness? These six are classes of consciousness: eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, nose-

consciousness, tongue-consciousness, body-consciousness, intellect-consciousness. This is called consciousness.

“And what is name-and-form [body/mind self-identification]? Feeling, perception, intention, contact, and attention: This is called name. The four great elements [earth, water, air, temperature], and the form dependent on the four great elements: This is called form. This name and this form are called name-and-form [body/ mind self identification].

“And what are the six sense media? These six are sense media: the eye-medium, the ear-medium, the nose-medium, the tongue-medium, the body-medium, the intellect-medium. These are called the six sense media.

“And what is contact [sense-media consciousness]? These six are classes of contact: eye-contact, ear-contact, nose-contact, tongue-contact, body-contact, intellect-contact. This is called contact.

“And what is feeling? These six are classes of feeling: feeling born from eye-contact, feeling born from ear-contact, feeling born from nose-contact, feeling born from tongue-contact, feeling born from body-contact, feeling born from intellect-contact [as either pleasant, painful or neutral]. This is called feeling.

“And what is craving [the urgency to uphold a self-notion]? These six are classes of craving: craving for forms, craving for sounds, craving for smells, craving for tastes, craving for tactile sensations, craving for ideas. This is called craving.

“And what is clinging [self-attachment]? These four are clingings: sensuality clinging, view clinging, precept and practice clinging, and doctrine of ‘self’ clinging. This is called clinging.

“And what is becoming [commitment to perform self-inspired actions through body, speech and mind]? These three are

becomings: sensual becoming, form becoming, and formless becoming. This is called becoming.

“And what is birth [engaging and performing self-inspired actions]? Whatever birth, taking birth, descent, coming-to-be, coming-forth, appearance of aggregates, and acquisition of [sense] media of the various beings in this or that group of beings, that is called birth.

“Now what is aging and death [as suffering consequences]? Whatever aging, decrepitude, brokenness, graying, wrinkling, decline of life-force, weakening of the faculties of the various beings in this or that group of beings, that is called aging. Whatever deceasing, passing away, breaking up, disappearance, dying, death, completion of time, break up of the aggregates, casting off of the body, interruption in the life faculty of the various beings in this or that group of beings, that is called death.

“Such is the origination of this entire mass of stress and suffering. SN 12, 2.

“When a person perceives impermanence, perception of non-self becomes established in him; and when a person perceives non-self, he arrives at the elimination of the conceit ‘I am,’ and that is Nirvana here and now.”(UD 4, 1).

“Suppose a man would catch six animals that had different domains and different feeding grounds, and he would bind them with a strong rope...then those six animals that had different domains and different feeding grounds would each pull toward their own feeding ground and domain....When those six animals have become weakened and fatigued, they would stand near that same post or pillar, sit near it, lie down near it...Just so, when any [person] awareness directed to the body is developed and cultivated, the eye does not pull him toward agreeable forms and disagreeable forms are not repulsive; the ear does not pull him toward agreeable sounds and disagreeable sounds are not repulsive; the nose does not pull him toward agreeable odors and disagreeable odors are not repulsive; the tongue does not

pull him toward agreeable tastes and disagreeable tastes are not repulsive; the body does not pull him toward agreeable tactile objects and disagreeable tactile objects are not repulsive; the mind does not pull him toward agreeable mental objects and disagreeable mental objects are not repulsive.

“A strong post or pillar...this is a designation for awareness directed to the body. Therefore, you should train this: ‘Awareness directed to the body will be developed and cultivated by us, made a vehicle, made a base, stabilized, repeated, and well undertaken.’ This indeed you should train.” SN 35, 247

Understanding the Buddha, we smile.